

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Office of Fire and Aviation
3833 South Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705-5354

January 12, 2001

In Reply Refer To:
1400-713 (FA-102)P

Director's Office Instruction Memorandum No. OF&A 2001-002
Expires: 09/30/02

To: All OF&A Employees

From: Director, Office of Fire and Aviation

Subject: Policy on the Prevention of Sexual Harassment

Program Area: Equal Employment Opportunity

Purpose: This Instruction Memorandum (IM) documents the policy of the Director, Office of Fire and Aviation on the prevention of sexual harassment in the workplace.

Policy/Action: It is the policy of the Director, Office of Fire and Aviation to prohibit all forms of sexual harassment, to maintain a work environment free of sexual harassment, and to ensure that such conduct by any employee—permanent, temporary, or seasonal—will not be tolerated (Attachment 1). Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination based on sex and is illegal under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

It is the responsibility of managers and supervisors to take immediate positive action when they receive a report of sexual harassment or if they believe some behavior may be construed as sexual harassment. I also want to remind you that the workplace can be an office, a field site, or the fireline. Sometimes employees mistakenly think that because they are in a remote location or on an incident they can behave in a manner that would be unacceptable in any other work setting. You must correct this misconception wherever you find it.

I ask for your personal commitment and support in communicating the message that sexual harassment in any form by Bureau of Land Management personnel will not be tolerated. We

must also reinforce the message that an employee can be held personally liable for sexual harassment and such conduct could cost an individual their job.

Time Frame: This IM is effective on receipt.

Budget Impact: The application of this policy to other program areas should have a positive impact on the budget by decreasing the cost of processing complaints of discrimination.

Background: Management has determined that employees need to be reminded of this policy on a yearly basis.

Manual/Handbook Sections Affected: No manual or handbook sections are affected.

Coordination: None.

Contact: If you have questions or concern regarding this policy, please contact Debie Chivers, EEO Manager, Office of Fire and Aviation at (208) 387-5454.

/s/Lee F. Englesby
Acting

1 Attachment

1 - Harassment-Free Workplace Policy (2 pp)

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NIFC Administrator

Fire Program Manager

Aviation Program Manager

**Bureau of Land Management
National Office of Fire and Aviation**

Harassment-Free Workplace Policy

Policy: It is the policy of the BLM to prohibit harassment in all of its various forms, to maintain a work environment that is free of harassment, and to ensure that such conduct by any BLM employee will not be tolerated.

Our standard is to strive for a work environment where people treat one another with respect. Managers, supervisors, and all employees, as well as our contractors, cooperators and volunteers have the primary responsibility for creating and sustaining this harassment-free environment. All employees, contractor personnel, and visitors must take personal responsibility for maintaining conduct that is professional and supportive of this environment.

Action Required: Managers and supervisors must take immediate action to stop harassment, to protect the people targeted by the harasser, and to take all reasonable steps to ensure that no further harassment or retaliation occurs. Employees who witness harassment should report it to the proper authority.

Locations Covered: The work environment covers any area where employees work or where work-related activities occur, including travel. This includes field sites, government buildings, and other facilities such as fitness centers and campgrounds. Also included are vehicles or other conveyances used for travel.

What Harassment Is: Harassment is coercive or repeated, unsolicited and unwelcome verbal comments, gestures or physical contacts and includes retaliation for confronting or reporting harassment. Examples of harassment include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Physical conduct: Unwelcome touching, standing too close, looking up and down, inappropriate or threatening staring or glaring, obscene, threatening, or offensive gestures.
- Verbal or written conduct: Inappropriate references to body parts, derogatory or demeaning comments, jokes, or personal questions; sexual innuendoes; offensive remarks about race, gender, religion, age, ethnicity, or sexual orientation, obscene letters or telephone calls; catcalls; whistles, sexually suggestive sounds; loud, aggressive, inappropriate comments or other vocal abuse.
- Visual or symbolic conduct: Display of nude pictures, scantily-clad, or offensively-clad people; display of offensive, threatening, demeaning, or derogatory symbols, drawings, cartoons, or other graphics; offensive T-shirts, coffee mugs, bumper stickers, or other articles.

Penalties: Any employee who engages in harassment will face consequences ranging from verbal warnings and letters of reprimand, up to and including termination from employment, depending on the seriousness of the misconduct. Managers and supervisors who do not take action when they know or suspect that harassment is occurring will face the same range of consequences. Contractor staff who engage in harassment may be subject to comparable penalties from their employers, and a contractor who fails to enforce this policy may have its contract terminated. Visitors who harass may be removed from any workplace and prevented from returning.

Individuals who believe they are being harassed or retaliated against should exercise any one or more of the following options as soon as possible:

- Tell the harasser to stop the offensive conduct; and/or
- Tell a manager or supervisor about the conduct; and/or
- Contact your EEO Office, EEO Manager, a Special Emphasis Program Manager, EEO Counselor, or any other individual you trust that would take action.
- Contact a Human Resource Officer, if one is available, when you are on an incident.

In addition, you may seek help from the Employee Assistance Program.